[31st December 1953

Abolition of District Boards.

* 40 *Q.*—SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Government have considered the abolition of district boards and the alternative agency to be set up in the place of the district boards; and

(*b*) if so, the decision taken thereon?

11-20 a.m. THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" (*a*) & (*b*) The matter is under the consideration of the Government."

SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM :—" Will the Hon. Minister tell us the circumstances in which the old taluk boards were abolished? "

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" It is an old story; it is not a thing of the present."

SRI M. P. GOVINDA MENON :—" May I request the Hon. Minister to have a settled policy once for all regarding local bodies before he begins to air about the possibilities of changes and thereby creating confusion? "

THE HON. SRI C. RAJAGOPALACHARI :—" I am intervening because it is a very general question applicable to all policies. I would like to tell hon. Members that in a democracy we have to fly a few kites before we know how the wind blows."

Election of members to the District Boards.

* 41 *Q.*—SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration be pleased to state—

(*a*) what steps have been taken by the Government to conduct the election of members to the district boards; and

(*b*) the programme of dates fixed for the same?

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" (*a*) & (*b*) The matter is under the consideration of the Government."

SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM :—" Was not a specific assurance given by the Hon. the Chief Minister that the elections would not be put off and that the newly-elected Boards would begin to function from 1st April 1953? "

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" Yes, Sir, it was promised on the floor of the Assembly. But the Government are contemplating legislation to extend the term of Special Officers by three more months, and we expect the elections will be concluded before June next."

SRI T. PURUSHOTHAM :—" As electoral rolls are ready, why should not the elections be held before March 1954? "

THE HON. SRI K. RAJARAM :—" There are several other things to be done before elections could be held."

31st December 1953]

Sri T. PURUSHOTHAM :—" May I know why preliminary arrangements have not been made already? When there is an Act limiting the term of Special Officers of the District Boards till the end of March 1954, why should not action have been taken in time for holding the elections? "

The Hon. Sri K. RAJARAM :—" We were in the midst of Andhra partition. Now we are making arrangements to hold the elections before June next."

Constitution of the Panchayat Boards of Arkonam, Arcot and Ranipet into municipalities.

*42 Q.—Sri T. PURUSHOTHAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration be pleased to state whether the Government have any proposal to constitute Arkonam, Arcot and Ranipet Panchayat Boards into municipalities, and if so, when?

The Hon. Sri K. RAJARAM :—" No, Sir. The latter part of the question does not arise."

Sri T. PURUSHOTHAM :—" May I know the population and income of these panchayat boards? "

The Hon. Sri K. RAJARAM :—" When the proposal is not on hand, how can I be expected to have information about population and other things? When the proposal comes, we can find out the income, population and other things."

Sri T. PURUSHOTHAM :—" Was there not a definite proposal mooted to constitute Arkonam into a municipality? "

The Hon. Sri K. RAJARAM :—" There was a proposal in 1949–50. But, because of protests made by the public and the Panchayat Board unanimously, the proposal was dropped in 1950."

Sri T. PURUSHOTHAM :—" Is there no set principle as to the minimum income and population for upgrading panchayat boards into municipalities? "

The Hon. Sri K. RAJARAM :—" If the population is above 20,000 and if the income is nearly Rs. 1,00,000, we can form a municipality."

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS.

Audit of the accounts of the Hindu religious institutions.

1 Q.—Sri T. PURUSHOTHAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Religious Endowments and Registration be pleased to state—

(a) the arrangement made for the periodical audit of the accounts of the Hindu religious institutions in this State;

(b) whether any audit fee is levied for the above purpose and collected from the temple funds;

(c) for what period audit has been completed; and